

Comrade Saddam Hussain

Talks to Arab and Foreign Pressmen



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**Deputy Secretary of the Regional Leadership
of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party and Deputy
Chairman of the Revolutionary Command
Council talks to Arab and foreign Pressmen**

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Comrade Saddam Hussain, Deputy Secretary of the Regional Leadership of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party and Deputy Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, held on 18th July evening 1973, in the National Council Building, a press conference attended by a big number of Arab and foreign pressmen, through which he replied to the questions asked by the attendants.

Following is the text of the conference events.

At the beginning of the press conference at 7 p.m., Comrade Saddam Hussain welcomed the pressmen.

He said: " I welcome you in our country, Iraq; I welcome you on behalf of our leader and President, and on behalf of the Leadership of our Party and of the Revolution. We hope that you would convey the whole truth each in the way he deems proper, not only in the way we are uttering it, but as you get directly acquainted with it. This country has been frequently subjected to light in directions contrary to those really existing in it. Many things have been frequently forged about it, and the face of truth has been frequently distorted.

You are searchers for truth, people of thought and knowledge; and we hope that you would convey the whole truth to your countries. We are ready now to listen to your questions and reply to them in full. Thank you".

The first question addressed by the correspondents of the Arab and foreign press agencies

and representatives of press, concerned the National Front and the reason for the non-participation of the Kurdistan Democratic Party.

The deputy chairman said: "We shall try to speak in detail to all those who asked questions on the Front, its contingents and foundations, and why the announcement has been made until now with the Iraqi Communist Party without including the Kurdistan Democratic Party and others from the progressive national and independent democratic trends.

"It is well-known at present that the Front is not a new idea in the national action programme, since the Regional Leadership of the ABSP has submitted the National Action Charter more than a year ago and called upon all the partiotic and progressive nationalist parties and forces to be united in one front and participate in all the constitutional institutions of government in keeping with a coalitive formula.

When the Charter was submitted for discussion, the discussion was not intended for propaganda to the effect that this country is living through a real democratic life. What was intended was the actual essential aspect namely, the arrival at the best formula for a National Action Charter through a serious dialogue along this path. A real dialogue has taken place between our Party on one hand and the Iraqi Communist Party, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and prominent elements of the progressive nationalist

trend and the independent national democratic trend. This has been one of the basic factors which delayed the rise of the Front, namely the serious dialogue between our Party and the contingents concerned with the Front along the path of working out the best opinions and formulas in the aforementioned Front, fundamentally based on the National Action Charter. Recently, full and detailed agreement has been reached between our Party and the communist Party. On this basis the announcement was issued signed yesterday by our Party and the Iraqi communist Party, and which clearly pointed out that dialogue is still afoot with the Kurdistan Democratic Party, and that the ABSP and ICP are actually desirous that this dialogue would lead as early as possible into a similar agreement with the KDP. Hence, the Front consists not only of the ABSP and the ICP alone, but the ABSP, the KDP, the ICP and elements of the progressive nationalist trend and independent democratic trend.

"Along the path of elaborating a unified opinion concerning the Charter and the relevant practical formula, we have traversed a long distance with the progressive nationalist trend and independent democratic progressive trend. Thus the Front leadership (the Front central leadership expected to include, in addition to the subsidiary leaderships, and the National Council which is working to constitute at the nearest opportunity; important elements from those trends namely, the progressive nationalist trend and independent democratic trend.

Q — Has the KDP refused to join the Front ?

A — The KDP has not refused to join the Front. But the dialogue is still going on with it for the purpose of reaching unified opinions concerning Front concepts or concerning the relevant formulas; and we hope to reach an agreement on this concern.

Q — Is there any intention of carrying out general elections in the country?

A — When the proper circumstances are ripe, and the contingents of the political front are agreed on the date of carrying out elections in the country and on the bases of the elections, it would be then possible to carry out general elections in the country.

Therefore, in principle, it is possible to carry out elections in the Iraqi region directly concerning the constitutional institutions connected with the Front and with the deepening of democracy in Iraq and enlarging the base of mass participation. I think you have been acquainted with the procedures taken during the past two days concerning the amendments in the Constitution, providing for the establishment of a body with the name of Council of Ministers, which is an institution or an executive authority with definite powers as pointed out in the amendments. You have also been acquainted with the law on the National Council and its amendments, which point out the serious desire for quick arrival at the formation of the National Council

which will include representatives of the parties and political forces indicated in the Charter and constituting the Front, as well as representatives of the workers, peasants and trade unions and vocational organisations in the country".

Concerning the question of the implementation of the 11 March statement on the democratic and peaceful solution the stages it has traversed, and whether there are any obstacles in the way of enforcing its remaining articles, and concerning the recent statements of Sd. Mustafa al-Barzani published in the foreign press, the Deputy Secretary of the Regional Leadership and Deputy Chairman of the RCC answered :

"It would be natural to point out that the announcement of the 11 March statement has been a serious start along the path of achieving peace in the northern parts of our beloved country. But the mere announcement is not enough to end the abnormal situation undergone by Iraq for nearly ten years of domestic war and fratricide, nor to put an end to all the complications created by the circumstances.

"Accordingly, the benevolent will which moulded the March statement among the Arabs and Kurds, with the support of all Iraqi people and their progressive patriotic forces are called upon to continue in the same zeal with which they produced the March statement along the path of the final establishment of peace in the northern parts of our beloved country. It will be

natural to say that we had not imagined, while endorsing the March statement, that the way would be smooth for carrying out the measures connected with the achievement of stability in the north and with the achievement of autonomy which is the basic essence of the March statement. Hence, we were faced with real difficulties as pointed out by the struggler-President in his speech on 16 July; but the desire and the will are still present for continuing the fruitful efforts for achieving all the tasks presented in the 11 March statement. It would be natural to point out that we have completed the greater part along this path, namely that concerning the Articles included in the March statement in the direction of autonomy. But there are still reciprocal obligations some of which are shouldered by us, while the others are shouldered by the KDP, and they have not been completed. There is still a dialogue between our Party and the KDP for reaching final formulas for achieving the above-mentioned tasks. As concerns the shortness of the period between the present date and the 11th of March, 1974, and whether it is possible that a change may occur in the matter of announcement of autonomy before 11 March, 1974, as pointed out by the President, we announce that there shall be no change in this date, and we will strive by all efforts and means to achieve autonomy before the 11th of March, 1974.

"As to the statements attributed to the brother, Chairman of the KDP, the same statements

which you have read and which have been published in several information media, as well as on the pages of the daily al-Thawra, mouthpiece of our Party in the Iraqi region, the KDP has been asked to voice its opinion concerning them; and the daily al-Taakhi, mouthpiece of the KDP has published explanations pointing out that they will ask for the original statement and then comment on the statement attributed to the brother Chairman of the KDP. We are still waiting for the KDP to give its opinion on the statements attributed to its Chairman, brother al-Barzani.

"As to the question of whether these statements will affect the present efforts and our intentions in the implementation of the March statement and the achievement of autonomy before 11 March 1974, the answer is : These statements whether true or not, will not affect our desire and resolution for achieving autonomy before 11 March, 1974, because we believe that the contents included in the March statement concern the whole Iraqi people and their security and future and not the future or security of one individual of this people whether he be a leader of KDP or the ABSP or belonging to other patriotic parties. We view the statement and its contents and our seriousness for implementing this statement on the basis of these concepts.

"As to how we imagine autonomy, we have our own conception of autonomy, but we do not want to rush matters and put forth a certain conception, especially since there is at present a dia-

logue between ourselves and the KDP, and also with the Communist Party and with the patriotic and progressive nationalist contingents connected with the Front and adherent to the texts of the Charter. Thus it will be premature to put forth our Party's conception of this matter at present.

In answering pressmen questions concerning the Palestinian issue, the submitted solutions, the recent statements on the Palestinian state and the attitude of the Iraqi region on them, he said : "Before going into details, we should point out first of all the reality of the attitude of the Iraqi region on the question of the Arab-Zionist conflict in the principle and political framework, which is consequently the attitude of our Party, the Arab Baath Socialist Party. We do not view the conflict between the Arabs and Zionists which have occurred on the Palestinian land with foreign support as a conflict of a religious character as far as the Arab's view on this conflict is concerned.

"As regards the Arab Palestinians themselves and how they looked at this conflict and whether other non-Arab parties which viewed the struggle on this basis, the question is left to their own discretion. The conflict between the Arabs and Zionists whether the Arabs and Zionists as a whole or between the Arabs of Palestine and the Zionists was caused by reasons other than the reasons referred to in a question put by one of our brothers. The gist of this conflict was the Zionist desire to establish an artificial entity on

our Arab territory in Palestine on account of our people in this area. Such concepts had received real backing from imperialism and from Britain, America and other western countries.

"This was the origin of the conflict. We don't want to prove that there was a conflict between religious points of views, that is a conflict between the Moslems and Jews as some people imagine. In fact such a conflict is non-existent.

"Throughout history, the Arab Moslems were well-known for their tolerant attitude in their relations with other Arabs and non-Arabs who embrace other faiths. The essence of the conflict is therefore based on the following basis as we understand it : a people wants to live peacefully on its territory and other groups backed by international imperialism and Zionism plan and actually exert themselves to evict this people from its territory and consequently occupy its land by force on this basis.

"As to how to view the statements said or quoted by the Foreign Minister of Algeria or President Bourguiba to have said on the Palestine state issue or the direct negotiation question whether the negotiators were non-Palestinian Arabs or representatives of the Palestinians from the resistance or others, from the very beginning we reject flatly the idea of admitting to the thief a part of the theft against restoring the remaining part to the original proprietor. This is the basic principle in our political view to all the solutions

proposed with regard to settling the socalled dispute between the Zionists and the Arabs.

SECURITY COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION REJECTED

"We believe that usurpation is already in existence before June 5, 1967. Usurpation by means of armed force backed by imperialism and the aggression of June 1967 are an expansion of the usurpation which began before 1948 and ended in 1948 on the Palestinian territories. Why was the Security Council's Resolution No. 242 of 22nd November rejected by Iraq? It is rejected by Iraq pursuant to the facts we have just indicated. Since the Security Council's resolution No. 242 of 1967 is based in its essence on admitting to the thief the largest part of the theft after restoring the remaining part of the theft to the original proprietor. The resolution may be acceptable to some circles, but to us it is not acceptable.

UNIFIED ARAB BANK

"As regards the establishment of a unified Arab bank; it is well known that a meeting was held early this month by the Arab finance and economic ministers in Cairo. They considered the question of dealing with the Arab financial question from two starting points. A political starting point related to pressurising imperialism and other Western countries which take a hostile attitude towards Arab causes of destiny and an

economic starting point related to financial calculations to protect Arab assets from shocks caused by the dollar crisis and the negative impacts thereon.

"Iraq has made a number of proposals in this regard. Foremost of which was the establishment of a unified Arab bank for development as well as the establishment of an Arab bank for foreign trade and a reserve fund for emergency. These proposals are based on the calculations we have already referred to, that is economic and financial starting points and political starting point. It is known that as on 31 December 1972 the assets of the central banks of the Arab oil producing countries stood at 9.8 milliard dollars of hard currency and the assets of the hard currencies in the commercial banks of the Arab oil producing countries stood at 2.3 milliard dollars regardless of the private money which was deposited in other banks.

"It is well known also that such hard currency assets represent 6.2 per cent of the total original hard currency assets in all the world. It is therefore necessary to use such cash assets which will certainly increase in the light of the energy crisis prices as a price in our national battle in addition to investing it for development and reconstruction in our Arab countries themselves. We should not assist the imperialist countries by such capital to enable them to use such money in such a way as to step up the imperialist restraints on our Arab people.

RELATIONS WITH THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

"As regards the formula which we see as fit for the relation between the resistance and Lebanon and also for the relation between the resistance and the Arab regimes where resistance exists, "we regard the resistance elements as struggling men from the sons of our people. On this basis we should give them every possible opportunity to resist imperialism and Zionism and we must provide all requirements of struggle on this path. We are carrying our task to the extent which we can on this path.

"The relations we see between the resistance and the Arab regimes are based fundamentally on this assessment and specified by inter-related practical formula, the most important of which is the path that the resistance should never interfere in the internal affairs of the Arab regimes. This is what is declared and observed actually by the resistance and that the Arab regimes should not under no disguise put stumbling blocks before the actions and efforts of the resistance to be present in certain places in order to be able to discharge its holy national and patriotic duty against the Zionists who usurped our Arab territories.

NO LIMIT FOR OUR SUPPORT TO RESISTANCE

Q — To what extent does Iraq support the resistance?

A — "Our Party, the Arab Baath Socialist Party in all its branches all over the Arab Homeland and the world at large and the government which is led by our Party in this country support the resistance until liberation. There is no limit on our side stopping us to extend support to the resistance short of this slogan namely the restoration of the usurped Arab territories to their legitimate owners whether Palestinian or other Arabs whose territories have been occupied whether in the Golan heights, the Western Bank, Gaza or Sinai.

"As regards Lebanon and its potentials to defend its territories against the Zionist enemy and its refusal to allow Arab forces to enter its territory, this is a question which concerns the Lebanese government. However, as Arabs we believe that the Arab power wherever it exists must be under the use of all regimes, Arab forces and Arab masses, wherever they are, must defend their sovereignty and their territories.

"Regarding the general political review of principle, we view matters on this basis. Although Lebanon does not allow Arab forces into its territories to defend it and yet on the other hand it is unable to build armed forces to defend its

territories, this is a question of concern to the people in the sisterly country and to the regime of this country. They have to search for a formula to defend the sovereignty of Lebanon and to defend the dignity of Lebanon whether by coordination with the neighbouring Arab countries or what is related to building a defensive force capable of standing in the face of the Zionist enemy."

ON EASTERN FRONT

The Comrade Deputy Secretary General of the Regional Leadership and Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council replying to the questions related to the Eastern Front and Iraq's attitude towards reforming such front said :

"Iraq has a clear attitude towards this matter declared in many occasions and statements were made also on several occasions. To eliminate the state of affairs they must be linked to their recent history, It is necessary to clarify that the Eastern Front was in existence when the Iraqi army was present in the Jordanian and Syrian territories. The Eastern Front was dissolved by a decision of its general commander when the Iraqi army was there. This was after accepting the Rogers' plan by some brothers in the Arab countries and regarding it as the possible solution of the Palestine question.

"On this basis orders were given to our army to withdraw from the front. In other words after the Eastern Front was dissolved by a decision,

orders were issued to withdraw the Iraqi army to Iraq.

"The other point is that we should accurately specify what is meant by the Eastern Front in terms of territories. It is the Jordanian territory, and Syrian territory facing the Zionist enemy. The Eastern Front therefore is not the Syrian territory only.

"I forgot to mention that when the Eastern Front was dissolved by a decision of the commander general, the Iraqi army was placed by a decision under the command of the Jordanian authorities. It is necessary to consider some facts to give a good basis for the reply.

"Every army in the world is a part of the state political regime. It is not possible for the army to fight when the political leadership decides not to fight. The other fact is that the Eastern Front had a significant role in deployment, calculations and military mobilisation. However, the Eastern Front and its existence in accordance with the military calculations framework alone is not sufficient to liberate the usurped Arab territories. Possibly the question will be more correct and accurate if it is reworded on the basis of what the requirements of liberation are. Then, when we talk about the requirements of liberation and deal with their military aspects it will be necessary to touch on the importance of re-forming the Eastern Front.

"If we suppose that the reforming of the

Eastern Front whether from the Iraqi and Syrian armies or the Iraqi and Jordanian armies will be possible like King Solomon's sceptre for the solution we aim at with regard to the Arab-Zionist conflict, it is a wrong supposition, particularly if this formula was separated from the real vision of liberation. All brothers present are journalists who read and listen and make their own conclusions by means of the realities related to the settlements proposed on the arena and the promotion of such settlements. It is wrong to close our ears and eyes to what is going on around us. It is also wrong to seclude the army from our regimes. For example a journalist asked what were the means for placing the Arab information at the service of the Arab cause. He said what are the means for placing the Arab regimes in the services of the liberation cause before placing the information. This question and its reply, which is related to the Arab information and the Arab regimes, will be questions and answers for what is related to the Arab armies and their regimes as well as their role, and the detailed questions related to the Eastern Front and other questions. Foremost of all, we must be equipped with the authentic determination to strike imperialism and Zionism. This is not sufficient. We must have clarity in the developed and new plans which we will apply in the arenas of struggle against imperialism and Zionism from stronger positions.

"Iraq has made public its views on the battle with the enemy. The gist of Iraq's practical visions

are based on the fact that we should not follow the ordinary path in confronting the enemy. We should not use methods wherever the enemy can surpass us by them. We must search for formulas unfamiliar to the enemy to confront him. In the meantime, these formulas should be of a vital relation and effect on the interest of the enemy in such a way as to bring him down on knees before our justful demands for evacuation of our occupied territories.

OIL AS A WEAPON

'We have presented a complete plan to the Arab Foreign and Defence Ministers on the use of oil as a weapon in the battle. The plan was detailed, and it was not a plan to outbid others. The plan was based on principles the most important of which was the nationalisation of the American shares of oil, due to their attitude which is hostile to our national causes and to serve a warning to other Western countries to the effect that their shares of the Arab oil will be nationalised if they carried on a hostile policy like the American policy. So far for the liberated Arab oil producing countries as regards the other Arab countries which are said to have special circumstances because their regimes do not allow nationalisation, the plan had a flexible provision in this regard. It is summed up by having these countries to ration the petrol to be sold to America and the Western countries which are hostile to the Arab struggle and which support Israel



against the Arabs, while the Arab assets deposited in the banks of such states should be withdrawn. The rationing of oil should be then on the actual requirements for the development plans and the current consumption of such states.

ARAB UNITY

"We have submitted also plans for the unity with some Arab countries to be established on a unified basis and to be regarded as a suitable background for establishing unity between us and any other liberated Arab country. In short, this basis is to the effect that the unified Arab countries should be actually serious on the path of liberation from imperialism and Zionism, that they should place all their actual potentials in the service of the battle, and should reject all compromise and surrender solutions.

ARAB OIL IN THE BATTLE

"Now how can the slogan of using oil in the battle be put into practise? It never occurred to us when we upheld this slogan that all Arab countries will be unanimous in realising it. However, the acceptance of certain Arab countries of this idea is sufficient to regard the project as suitable and successful, and begin to apply it. We will be the first to apply it. We have talked in detail on this subject with some Arab brothers. The path of liberation does not pass through the Eastern district under the current circumstances,

it passes across many paths among which are the military deployment and mobilisation plans which move the Eastern Front. According to the basis we have just mentioned we are prepared to place a sufficient part of our forces on the path of liberation according to any effective formula. As regards the mediation of resistance as pointed out in our question between us and Syria for coordinating efforts to establish unity, some brothers in the resistance clarified some viewpoints regarding these questions. However we have put up directly our views to our brothers in Syria and Egypt before them. That was in March 1972. We are always prepared to establish unitary relations and coordinate in such a way as to place the military, economic, financial and human efforts on the path of the real struggle against imperialism and Zionism when such intentions are existent.

OIL AS WEAPON

"As regards the use oil as a weapon in the battle, we are capable to use oil as a weapon in the national battle, we are prepared to be the first Arab country to use this weapon if a small number of Arab countries agrees according to a central plan of liberation to use oil as a weapon in the battle."

AMERICA AND THE ARAB GULF

'In reply to a question if any change had been undergone by the American diplomacy to

move to the Arab Gulf area due to the energy crisis. His Excellency said, "the American diplomacy is a part of the American policy. The American policy is an expression of American interest and greediness, so the "change" if we can use this expression has not taken place in diplomacy but in selecting the positions which are more important for the interest and greediness of American imperialism in this area. It is axiomatic to say that it is not possible for any power however powerful it is to confront various fronts and to be present in many positions whether using defensive or offensive formulas. It will never remain equally strong in all these positions. On this basis any power in the world whether moved by imperialistic aims or liberational aims should give priorities to their visions and their political, economic and military presence.

It is well known that America is after influence; would it be possible for it, it would have controlled the whole world. Is it possible for America to control the whole world and to be present in sufficient forces in all areas of the world to implement its evil intentions? The reply is in the negative. It is inevitable to draw a system of priority for selecting the more strategical areas and be present there, if we can use this expression. According to the vision of the American imperialism, the more strategical areas which are linked to its economic, political and military interests is the Arab Gulf area. This serves as an interpretation of American activities in this area.

ENERGY CRISIS

As to the talk about the relation of the crisis of energy with such activities it is inevitable to say that there is a real crisis of energy in the world. However, it is necessary to cast a light on the nature of the fuss made by America recently on the crisis of the energy.

It is well known that emphases were laid on the energy crisis after the nationalisation of the IPC operations. By this fuss America wanted military and political aims. It wanted to prepare the American public opinion and the American constitutional institutions and public opinion of some Western countries and peoples to accept and express solidarity with the criminal plans which America intends to execute in this area under this pretext. We have to realise these facts and we have to expose the related American intentions. America threatens with the occupation of oil sources.

America can occupy some oil sources but it cannot occupy all oil sources. It can occupy some of these sources for a certain time but it cannot maintain its occupation for the whole duration in which it requires the energy of this area. The question of using force for securing energy to the West, emphasised by America through some of its officials, is a futile question of irrelevance.

America and all the states of the world which have real interest in securing continuity of energy supply should search for a new path. This new path

is the respect of the peoples will of the area and the recognition of independance and security and not to look after military methods in occupying oil sources.

Within this area it is well known that America can say it trusts some regimes on the pretext that such regimes carry on discharging their obligations to supply energy. Didn't America, Britain and some other states trusted until the eve of 14th July 1958 that Baghdad Pact would remain in force and Baghdad was a part of that Pact. Is there any logic or fact confirming the probability of having these regimes standing as they are now and the probability of a continuous energy supply the most important of which is oil to America in the methods selected by America itself? We know that if America is capable to secure this it will never be capable to secure it for ever against the will of the peoples of the area which have felt the dangerous imperialistic role being played by America in this area. America and others like her which are interested in securing oil sources should follow new methods and new policies towards the peoples of the area.

CENTO PACT AND ARMAMENT OF IRAN

"Regarding the development of CENTO Pact, the armament of Iran and other relative complications, it is obvious that CENTO was established a long time ago; Iraq was part of it. The Pact was paralysed following July 14 Revolution of 1958 with the withdrawal of Iraq. In the recent period,

the US and Iran have been exerting extraordinary efforts to revive the Pact in such a way as to undertake specific tasks against the security of the peoples that the US is undertaking a basic role in the armament of the Pact, in terms of arming Iran. However, it can be said that arms alone are not a guarantee for future stability; arms are not the only guarantee for any regime whether in Iran, or in Iraq. What counts is that the policy adopted by any country in the world should respond to the interests of the people; the regime which arms its forces on this basis is the one which is bound to survive.

"The arms supplied to CENTO could be used against the Iranian regime itself by the peoples of Iran, if those peoples realise, and they have already, that these arms are not being used in defence of their sovereignty, but to foster the interests of the foreigner on account of self-sovereignty and at the expense of the area with which they have common objective, historical and religious links.

"We call for establishing relations of real peaceful coexistence between the regimes in the area, regardless of their different inclinations. This is the sounder way, if it is actually desired through national sincerity, to implement the slogan of maintaining peace in the area, which can never be attainable through the presence of the US or the extra-ordinary armament undertaken by Iran; it should come the other way round.

"To us, these are our concepts of the relationship between us and Iran, between us and any Arab country in the area. At the same time, we are sufficiently prepared to defend valiantly our people's sovereignty and homeland regardless of the magnitude of the deals and whatever certain people say of its effectiveness".

WE EXTEND ANY SUPPORT REQUESTED OF US

Regarding Iraq's role in developing the struggle of the Palestinian people and the Arab people in the Gulf, His excellency replied: "We extend unconditional support if it is requested of us; we aim through this to achieve stability in the area in such a way as to maintain its sovereignty and safeguard the security and dignity of its people. Therefore, we extend assistance to our brethren, states and peoples, in the Gulf area if they demanded us to do so in defence of their security and sovereignty.

"Regarding the promotion of the struggle of the Palestinian freedom fighters, we put forth proposals on this thoroughfare to the brethren in the resistance and hold consultations with them in that respect, and extend material and moral support to them.

STATEMENT OF SAUDI DEFENCE MINISTER

Concerning the statements of the Saudi Minister of Defence, as inquired about by a reporter, in which he pointed out that any aggression

on any state in the Gulf would be tantamount to an aggression on Saudi Arabia, with the enquirer eluding to Iran, His Excellency replied: "Let us say it frankly; haven't you read about; haven't you heard of, or haven't you seen the manoeuvres underway in the area? Are they invisible enough to need explanation? Is it appropriate to set a question in this manner? The statement of the Saudi Minister of Defence does not imply Iran; it implies a sisterly state to Saudi Arabia; a brotherly people of Saudi Arabia. It implies the dedication of the myth of which certain people talk that Iraq is the source of danger to the Gulf, rather than Iran. We have always said that Iraq constitutes no danger; Iraq is an Arab state; Iraq is a sisterly state to all neighbouring Arab countries. In the most it can extend advice to the Arab brethren if it feels an imminent danger posed against them, and extend unconditional support if it is demanded to do so in defence of the security and sovereignty of these states. Iraq does not look forward to, and never thinks ambitiously of, such utilisation of arms against the Arab brethren. Let us imagine together, you have read and heard a lot of something called after Samita Post.

SMALL MISTAKE EXAGGERATED

"Let us suppose that a mistake was committed by certain Iraqi police troops, in their friction with members of the police and armed forces of the sisterly state of Kuwait. But, is it permissible that, within the context of such limited issue, within this narrow scope, that so much exaggera-

tion be embarked upon and so many trumpets being blown. These trumpets actually kept silent in respect to the occupation by the government of Iran of three Arab islands at the entrance of the Arab Gulf. The aim is clear-cut to those who have ailments in their hearts; who are counted among the Arabs. We actually mean those who are in official positions who try to shed lights and attempt to mislead the Arab people in the Gulf area that Iraq, rather than Iran, is the source of danger, despite the actual occupation committed by Iran of the three Arab islands in the Gulf area, and notwithstanding the open declaration by Iranian authorities of Iran's expansionary covets in the area.

"Therefore, the Saudi statement does not imply Iran, and it would be too hard for the Saudi brother Minister who made the statement to allude to Iran. We confirm sincerely and without any fear, that we are not in a position to think of using arms against our Arab brethren anywhere, whatever their regime, whether different in essence or similar to ours.

REAL DANGER

"The real danger does not come from the progressive liberated countries; it does not come from the countries which raise high the banner of Arab unity, on the basis of respecting the sovereignty and will of the Arab people. It rather comes from the treacherous reactionary states in collusion with the US and Iran; it comes from the

US and Iran; it comes from all the alliances which are held behind the scenes in that direction. This is the real danger. National declarations should be accurate and should be directly set against such danger. Therefore, it is not permissible to place the statement of the brother Saudi Minister within the framework we have tackled, implying it would allude to Iran or the imperialist powers.

"Regarding the Iraqi arrangements to confront the dangers, notably in the Gulf, we have already referred to this aspect and pointed out that if the Arab brethren requested us, and when we were not regarded a source of danger, we would respond; the danger comes from those countries which occupy Arab territories and plan publicly with the United states to occupy other Arab territories in the area and control water passages. We don't consider preparations as confined to the military aspect; we consider the preparation in the military field as one of the arms used in confrontation of Zionism and imperialism, against the imperialist danger posed by Iran in the area.

"The construction of the state on the principles we have always declared; the principles proclaimed by the Leader-President in his speech of July 16, is the construction in various fields within the context which places aside the question of capitalist development and relies on the course of socialist reconstruction of the state. This is the decisive pathway of confronting imperialism, Zionism and reaction; confrontation and

terrorisation of the forces colluding secretly and publicly to inflict damages on our people's interests, security and sovereignty in the Arab Gulf and other parts of the Arab Homeland".

Concerning contacts with Iran at the foreign ministers' level, his Excellency replied: "We confirm here that we do not desire to use the arms in settling the outstanding questions between countries. We do not desire, nor do we believe, in using arms to settle problems between Iraq and its neighbours; we use arms in defence of our sovereignty if it were violated; at this point, we are bound to use all sorts of arms.

"We confirm here that we are still prepared to hold a real dialogue and direct contacts, without mediation, with Iran, through full recognition of our sovereignty and full abandonment of the policy of expansion and occupation".

RELATIONS WITH KUWAIT

In respect to the relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and between Iraq and Kuwait, His Excellency said: "In fact we have a specific attitude towards the activities of Saudi Arabia in the area; we believe firmly that such activity does in no way serve the interests of our Arab people in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. Regarding our relations with Kuwait, they are friendly and normal; a simple problem occurred and was done away with, and things were restored to normal. We still believe that fraternal dialogues in accordance with the nationalist concepts and the outlook to

mutual interests are bound to provide sound solutions. We are prepared, and have always been so, to establish any contact with the brethren in Kuwait at any level in accordance with these principles".

Comrade Saddam Hussain replied to reporter's questions regarding a prospective Iraqi-Kuwaiti top-level meeting and the Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations, saying: "Although we have answered these questions, we want to refer to certain aspects and confirm that it is still appropriate for a friendly and fraternal meeting between Iraqi and Kuwaiti authorities, whenever the brethren in Kuwait express their desire to do so and at whatever level they recommend.

"Brother Murtadha Saeed Abdul Baqi, the Foreign Minister, visited Kuwait and held friendly talks on this matter; mention should be made that the talks on the recent border crisis had not been accurate from the objective point of view. The border crisis has in no way been recent; it did not occur only in 1972. No doubt Iraqi-Kuwait borders have not been demarcated, and no agreement has been reached on them ever since Kuwait emerged independent until this time, in terms of a final and legal agreement between the two respective authorities. This problem, if it can be termed as such, was not a problem in 1972; we are fully prepared, as we have always declared, to demarcate the borders in such a way as to safeguard the interests of the brethren in

Kuwait, the interests of Iraq and the interests of the Arabs in the Gulf area".

In reply to a question by a foreign journalist, His Excellency said, "To be precise, there are the Arab people proliferated all over the Arab Homeland, and there are Arab rulers.

"We believe that there is a full interaction between the experience being made in Iraq and the Arab people all over the Arab Homeland, in some way or another. Regarding the Arab regimes we do not think the question is accurate as to whether we are isolated in terms of relations with them.

"We have good and positive relations with some of our brethren in the Arab states, regimes and rulers. As for certain brethren Arab rulers, the situation is commonly known.

"Certain people maintain another viewpoint of this regime as a regime rather than the policy adopted by it towards a specific question. In this respect we are not to tackle the measures which are bound to ease up our isolation from certain Arab rulers who have this concept of the experience taking place in our country, and who adopt a passive or hostile attitude. They are demanded to look for principles to change their opinion towards us and our regime. It is necessary here to elaborate certain aspects of this answer. Had it not been said of China, until recently, that it had been isolated from the world? Had it not been said of the Soviet Union, until several years

ago, that it had been isolated from the world? Was the policy of the two countries to blame, or was it the outlook of certain regimes in the world to such policy?

"Regarding principles of doctrine which we adopt, we are not due to explore that principles which are bound to change our outlook, which we believe sound for the settlement of the problems of our people. This course is specifically related to our concept of the liberation struggle, our solidarity with the Arab fighters, our solidarity with the world, our condemnation of imperialism and imperialist policies and our denunciation of the imperialist practices.

"The others are demanded to reconsider their policies so as to be consistent with the liberation outlook. We are not demanded to reconsider our policy under the guise of relaxing the isolation. We look confidently upon ourselves as in no way isolated from the Arab Homeland, people and certain governments which represent the bulk of the Arab policy".

EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN UNITY

Regarding the unity between Egypt and Libya and whether this experience will succeed or fail, Comrade Hussein pointed out, "We hope sincerely success to this unity, in the service of our Arab liberation struggle and to the consolidation of our popular democratic unitary concepts. Regarding the handicaps which faces

unity, this was mentioned in an open discussion between brother President Muammar al-Gaddafi and some Egyptian intellectuals, referring to certain handicaps tackled in detail by certain Egyptian information media".

In reply to an enquiry that the Arab Baath Socialist Party assumed the power in two Arab countries and the measures adopted in the course of unity, Comrade Hussein pointed out, "I believe the enquirer meant that unity-oriented party took over the ruling authority in 1963 in two Arab countries; then why was Arab unity not accomplished between them? If that is the question, then I should like to reply that the Party took the initiative to put forth the unity project as envisaged by April 17 Charter, proclaimed in agreement between Iraq, Egypt and Syria and was entombed following the overthrow of the Iraqi regime by the treacherous November conspiracy of 1963. But, if the question refers to the present time, then there are two regimes of the Arab Baath Socialist Party in Iraq and Syria. As to which regime represent the party, we maintain a straightforward, clear and detailed opinion on this matter. Regarding the relationship between the two regimes, i.e. the two states, I should say relations are normal between Iraq and Syria, and we are looking forward to developing them to foster the interest of the Arab struggle. We also maintain viewpoints on which we had held talks with the brethren in Syria and still hope that relations between Iraq,

and Syria will be so promoted as to foster the Arab interests on the pathway of liberation".

IRAQ READY FOR COORDINATION

As for the call for the convention of a summit conference for coordination between the Arab states to confront the imperialist-Zionist threat, His Excellency said, "Iraq has always been prepared to establish any sort of link or relationship and to coordinate with any Arab state proceeding from a serious and real desire to confront imperialism and Zionism. We should agree that no separation is practical between the Zionist schemes in the area and the imperialist schemes and interests in the same area. Having reached this agreement, definition should be made of the relationship between Iraqi and any Arab state, in as much it is far off or near to the imperialist schemes, so as to provide a real concept of the seriousness of the call for confrontation against Zionism, proceeding from positions which are more capable of contributing to the Arab struggle. Iraq is prepared, whether in respect to the convention of a summit conference or any other level, to respond; however, the call should be so concerted and premeditated as to constitute a serious step on the pathway of confronting imperialism and Zionism. Frankly speaking we do not believe that a summit meeting of representatives of all Arab states is capable of adopting decisive and effective resolutions in that direction. What are the formulas that can foster the interest of Arab

struggle against Zionism and imperialism in the area on the level of coordination and meeting between Arab regimes? As we believe, coordination should be made between the liberated Arab regimes to bring about effective formulas to lead Arab struggle in that direction and place the others either in the position of embarrassment, hence their support, or in the position of exposition, hence their submissive conduct vis-a-vis solidarity against imperialism and Zionism; both courses are useful".

IMPERIALISM AIMS AT UNDERMINING PROGRESSIVE REGIMES

In reply to questions referring to imperialist manoeuvres against Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Yemen, the Arab people of the Gulf, the Palestine resistance and the means of confronting imperialist schemes in such a way as to foil them, Comrade Hussein said, "The reply is to consolidate relationship between the Arab regimes concerned, promotion of real belief in the role of masses — thus discrediting the superficial belief — intensification of efforts to establish internal fronts within the respective countries and between the liberated Arab countries which are becoming the direct target of imperialism and Zionism. In fact, imperialism and Zionism do not only aim at Iraq and Democratic Yemen, as states. They aim at undermining the struggle of Arab freedom fighters wherever they are; they aim at undermining the national and progressive Arab regimes wherever they exist. Therefore, the solu-

tion, as we have pointed out, is by establishing fronts comprising the national political forces in each Arab state and a national-nationalist Arab front at the level of the Arab Homeland comprising the national parties and forces, so as to bring about a coordination between the Arab regimes against the conspiracies and schemes of imperialism and Zionism.

"The consolidation of democratic institutions, promotion of democracy, observance of the peoples determination, the practices currently taking place in Iraq, are the milestones of these steps. We feel righteous, having achieved strides on this pathway towards the establishment of democratic relations and national solidarity between political movements in Iraq, to demand others to follow suit without any hesitation if they really want to confront Zionism, imperialism and their schemes in the area".

On the support extended by Iraq to the anti-imperialist freedom fighters the world over, Comrade Hussein said, "Iraq has, and is bound to continue exerting fruitful efforts in that direction; it has extended moral and material support to freedom fighters the world over to consolidate their anti-imperialist fight in general and anti-Zionist fight in particular, within the scope of its capability. Iraq has adopted a clearcut foreign policy against imperialism and the imperialist policies in the world. A decisive contribution by Iraq has been represented in coordination with



the anti-imperialist forces to formulate more effective attitudes against US-led world imperialism".

RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN, U.S. AND WEST GERMANY

Regarding relations with Britain and whether Britain, the U.S. and West Germany have contacted Iraq for the restoration of normal relations, His Excellency said, "We are prepared, as we have always stressed, to reconsider our attitude regarding diplomatic relations with these countries, if they reconsider the reasons which led Iraq to break off its diplomatic relations with them, so as to bring matters into even conditions. We have broken off our relations for reasons which are still valid. These countries are demanded to reconsider their policies towards the reasons which resulted in breaking of diplomatic relations with them".

Regarding Iraq's attitude to the Arab summit conference and the non-alignment conference due to be held in September in Algeria, Comrade Saddam Hussein pointed out, "In respect of the possibility of holding a summit conference in Algeria it is obvious, as declared by Sd. Mahmoud Riyadh, the Secretary General of the Arab League that not all Arab states will be represented at the non-alignment conference. On the other hand the convention of an Arab summit conference, in order to be effective in confronting Zionism, should be preceded by contacts and

coordination of efforts both for purposes of agenda and resolutions. We do not believe that there is an effective possibility to achieve the convention of the said conference; we do not imagine that such summit conference, rather than the non-alignment conference, can ever be capable of providing a serious contribution to liberation from imperialism and Zionism without due consideration to the necessary preparations and principles we have referred to.

FULL SUPPORT FOR NON-ALIGNMENT CONF.

"Regarding the non-alignment conference we fully support its convention and all the efforts being exerted in that direction. We also fully support the policy of non-alignment and exert every possible efforts to promote our effective role in that direction. It is useful to point out that the policy of non-alignment is a scientific revolutionary embodiment of the policy accepted and adopted by our Party before any other regime in the world. Our Party has, before a large number, or rather all regimes, called for the convention of a non-alignment conference, before it came to power. Regarding the conference agenda and the economic matters to be discussed by the conference, it is common place that the non-alignment foreign ministers had met in George Town and adopted a programme in that direction. On this subject we put forth our opinion in that respect.

From this forum, and at the non-alignment conference we call for the adoption by the non-aligned countries of a clear-cut policy regarding elimination of imperialist domination over our natural resources, towards their full liberation. A question is raised as whether we believe that the non-aligned countries could convince the U.S. to abandon its hostile policy, we reiterate the same concept we referred to earlier, that the U.S. is forced to abandon its hostile policy; it is never convinced to abandon such policy towards the non-aligned nations. Our delegation to the non-aligned conference will be lead by the representatives of the political leadership. At any rate we shall endeavour to contribute effectively to the success of the non-alignment conference for liberation from imperialism, and towards positive alignment with the peoples fighting against imperialism all over the world".

ON BREZHNEV-NIXON SUMMIT

Regarding the summit meeting between Mr. Brezhnev and President Nixon of the U.S., Comrade Hussein pointed out, "There are certain facts which should be referred to before dwelling upon direct and traditional reply. Among the most outstanding facts that those who have not enjoyed the capability, sacrifice and potentialities to defend themselves, their sovereignty and liberty, should not demand the friends to take up the responsibility of defending them, their security, their sovereignty and their future.

"Therefore we will not be revealing a secret if we point out that we in Iraq have not attached importance to the question of discussing the so called Middle East question by Mr. Brezhnev and Mr. Nixon, President of the U.S., for we have always seen to it not to overburden our friend. The Soviet Union has its own considerations at the level of international relations; we have our own in respect to our national and nationalist liberation, mostly identical but not totally similar in regard to this matter.

"On this basis, we consider the Soviet Union as a truthful friend in support of the Arabs; many of the socialist countries are extending, in one way or another, support to the Arab struggle. But at the same time, we do not look forward to the Soviet Union or any other friendly country in the world to assume our responsibility in defending our independence, sovereignty and legitimate rights if the brethren in the Arab countries were expecting that the meeting would result in a settlement of a so called question, then this might be consistant with their political and conceptual outlook to the matter in question, mainly the conflict between the Arabs and Zionists.

"Regarding the viewpoints which might have been discussed by Mr. Brezhnev and Mr. Nixon on this matter, we have not taken note of their respective opinions; we have only had access to the analyses of the information and press media of the world. Therefore we have nothing to say of what field are we in line with the Soviet opinion

if such opinion had ever been put forth, and what points are we different, unless we have taken note of the Soviet attitude in this respect".

ON RELATIONS WITH FRIENDLY COUNTRIES

In reply to questions regarding Iraq's relations with certain friendly countries and Iraq's attitude in respect to their difference, Comrade Hussein said, "The Iraqi people have close and friendly relations with the Afghani people, based on many considerations, e.g., common religion. Iraq had always considered the promotion of relations with the peoples of this area, notably Afghanistan, of special significance. Regarding the disputes between Pakistan and Afghanistan we hope they will be settled by peaceful means to the mutual interests of all parties concerned, without violation of peoples' rights to self-determination. We are aware of the fact that imperialism, on leaving a country, leaves behind many problems on which neighbours differ. The problem referred to is the remnant of imperialism and we hope it will be settled through the friendly means between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"Iraq has close and friendly relations with India, and we believe that the more these relations are promoted through friendship, thus providing common attitudes towards imperialism and its schemes, the more Iraq and India will become

capable of extending a real support, in terms of economic assistance, to the peoples of the area and any other people fighting for economic liberation".

In reply to a question related to the President's visit to Poland, Comrade Hussein said :

"The President paid a visit to the friendly state of Poland and a similar visit to the friendly state of Bulgaria. Economic and technical agreements were concluded with these two countries, and it can well be said, without hesitation, that the President's visit was successful. During these two visits, discussion was held on the principles of backing up the struggle of the peoples of the world against imperialist schemes. Viewpoints were identical on many matters".

SPANISH SAHARA

In reply to a question regarding the Spanish Sahara, His Excellency said :

"We believe, in regard to the problem of the Spanish Sahara that the people of the area, including the Arab people, are capable of pinpointing accurately their real interests. The people of the Spanish Sahara are capable, at the same time, of defining accurately the formula safeguarding their interests. We shall be with the right of peoples to self-determination. We also believe that Spain, with which we have friendly relations, can

reach settlement with the respective parties in the maintenance of the principle we have referred to; namely, the right to self-determination".

In reply to a question on our relations with Mauritania, comrade Hussein said :

"Iraq's economic relations with the African states are rather weak to a large extent, for reasons related to transportation and communication difficulties. However, we look forward to promote our economic relations with Africa and enhance our magnitude in trade exchange. Naturally, we devote attention to developing our relations with Mauritania accordingly."

NADHEM GZAR'S TREACHEROUS PLOT

Regarding the treacherous conspiracy staged by Nadhem Gzar, comrade Hussein said :

"To begin with, the investigation revealed no link between any foreign country and the treacherous conspiracy. We should point out that the treacherous conspiracy depended on the technical aspects and fate which enabled the clique to commit its criminal act through the effective positions its members held in the State and Party systems. The attempt was not staged on the basis of relying on a large number of party members or the people.

"As for the question whether any ideological differences had induced the clique to commit its

act, we should point out that if there existed any disputes they would have reached out to those who have set the question, for Beirut newspapers would have taken the initiative to publicize them. This is one of our decisive proofs to deny any ideological differences between the Party and the clique.

"Regarding the disputes and whether the attempt has resulted in passive consequences at the Party and popular levels, I should say that some of you have been in Baghdad for several days now and some others visited Baghdad immediately after the treacherous conspiracy; you could judge if the treacherous conspiracy had ever resulted in any passive consequences at the party and popular levels. On our part, we confirm that the treacherous attempt was staged by a few people on whom sentences were passed. This treacherous attempt practically intensified the consciousness and determination of the Party and people to carry on with the course of achieving the strategic objectives defined by July 17 revolution and drawn up by the leader-party — the Arab Baath Socialist Party.

"In respect to the positive consequences, we should add that there are great many differences between a revolution and a coup d'etat; between a revolutionary party and a reformist party. Among these fundamental differences is that the genuine popular revolution and a doctrinal revolutionary party, if they are confronted by any crisis, are

driven ahead rather than aback. This has been the case with our Party and our Revolution and our masses.

"The reformist movements and military coup d'etats which call themselves revolutions usually suffer a setback if they are confronted by a counter action, especially from within their setup; they seek a way out after their retreat, while revolutionary movements seek bridges ahead, hence the conduct of the Arab Baath Socialist Party. It will be erratic to imagine that this treacherous operation can affect the party's determination to fight against imperialism and Zionism and achieve the real, radical and full liberation from imperialism and all its schemes to control our economy and morale, in Iraq or at the level of the Arab homeland. This is the positive consequence of the treacherous conspiracy which has added a new experience to our experiences in confronting treason and conspiring. The positive aspect is to make our fighters more capable of prospecting the more effective means of consolidating democracy and the Revolution and the more fruitful means of bolstering the Party's strategic objectives for liberating the Arab masses."

SAMARRA'IE'S ROLE IN TREACHEROUS PLOT

"With regard to Abdul Khaleq al-Samarra'ie, we have nothing to add to what was announced by the official spokesman when he gave the de-

tails of the treacherous plot. As investigations revealed, Abdul Khaleq al-Samarra'ie learned of the details of the treacherous plot by 6.30 in the evening of the same day. He was informed of the plot by criminal and traitor Mohammed Fadhel. It is wrong to put the question in such a way as to enquire whether Abdul Khaleq al-Samarra'ie had a positive role or whether he confined himself to a passive attitude in the treacherous plot. Such a question might be asked of a simple citizen who happened to know of the plot, but is absolutely not fit concerning the role of one of the leaders of the Party and the state. What was required of Abdul Khaleq al-Samarra'ie was not only to inform the leadership but, more than that, to take direct action against the traitorous and treacherous plot which was aimed against the Party and the people. The commutation of the sentence from death to life imprisonment by a decision of the Secretary General of that Regional Leadership and President of the Republic did not come as a result of mediation by any one, nor the result of intervention by any person however dear such a person might be to us. Among the persons dear to us is our comrade, the Founding-Leader, Sd. Michael Aflaq.

NOT FIRST OF ITS KIND !

"It goes without saying that Party strugglers cannot but be unanimous in condemning an operation against the Party and against the revolution. They cannot but strike with an iron fist on the

adventurers who actually betrayed the doctrines on which they were brought up and reared within the Party's framework. True, this attempt in the way it happened, at this time when the revolution has covered substantial ground, merits inquiries and considerable attention. But this must not make us lose sight of the fact that this is not the first incident of its kind in history nor the first act of treachery in the history of revolutionary movements. History tells us of leading personalities, some even occupying higher ranks who try to betray their comrades and their revolution. Cases of this kinds are recorded in recent history, including the role of the late Abdul Hakem Amer after the Pune aggression and his relations with the late Abdul Nasser, on whom he was plotting. "There was also the case of Lin Piao in China. From this it follows that this case is not the first of its kind in the history or revolutionary movements.

FOREIGN PLOTS ON IRAQ

Replying to a question as to whether Iraq had been exposed to foreign plots, comrade Hussein answered: "Yes indeed, and will remain to be so exposed as long as it continues to pursue an anti-imperialistic policy in support of the struggle of people. Announcements were made of those plots at time. The most prominent was the one in which Iran played a main role.

"As to the reason for the commutation of the death sentence passed on Abdul Khaleq

al-Samarra'iे to life imprisonment, this act has no thing to do with the attitude of Abdul Khaleq al-Samarra'iе—an attitude described as a passive one vis-a-vis the treacherous plot. While we faced that criminal act which was directed against the lives of comrades at the Party leadership, we meant to leave the imprint that is connected with the Party's ethics. The measure we have taken demonstrated our visualisation of political measures and of the question of violence. We meant to make it known that we employ violence — and the highest of violence at that, namely death sentences — only in bare necessity in defence of the security of the revolution and the security of the Party. Never do we contemplate the use of violence for revenge. We also meant to make it known that even in the darkest moments, we do not close our eyes to good work once made on behalf of the Party and for promoting the Party's struggle and the Party's doctrines. Those were the reasons which motivated the Party's leadership to commute the death sentence passed on Abdul Khaleq al-Samarra'iе to life imprisonment".

Replying to a question as to whether Nadhem Gzar had other collaborators not yet made known, Comrade Hussein said: "No; if there were other collaborators, they would have been led to court where justice would have been meted out to them and they would have received the penalty they deserved".

CAUSES OF A HASTY TRIAL

To a question on the causes of haste in conducting the trial, Sd. Hussein said: "To our mind, the trials were done openly and in a clear way. Force was employed in the plot and blood flowed in broad daylight. Against this setting, it was sufficient for the investigator to simply ask those who raised arms in the face of the Party and the Revolution whether or not they were among the clique which carried out the plot. The investigator also asked about the motives which led the plotters to take part in that action. All confessed to their responsibilities and to the acts for which they deserved punishment. The only exception was Abdul Khaleq al Samarra'ie who denied the contents of the testimonies made against him including in the forefront the testimony made by former member of the Regional Leadership, namely Mohammed Fadhel."

Replying to another question on the same subject, Sd. Hussein said: "The country's position was not shaken whether at the level of the State or the level of the Party or the level of the broad masses. The only thing was that the masses were pained and so were the Party strugglers. They were pained to see a person from among the ranks of the Party come forward to betray the Party in such a criminal way. But you must have felt the determination of the people and of the Party to stick to their democratic traditions and maintain the values reared by the

Party in the struggle against any action where force is used as substitute to persuasion whether in Party or State establishments. This is the path of rectitude which our Party has been pursuing. This is the right path pursued by our revolution and by our constitutional establishments within the State. This is the path to which we shall stick".

To a question on the revolution's plan to increase the number of employed women in various branches of employment, Comrade Hussein said: "The number of employed women runs parallel with the extent of the emancipation of the Iraqi society which, in turn, runs parallel with the Revolution's advance towards the objectives set by the Party. We shall be committing a grave mistake if we imagined for a moment that we can increase the number of employed women by any other way. Such an error will be identical with that which assumes that feminist associations can achieve the emancipation of women while the society remained backward. The trend towards keeping the second half of the society inside the walls of the home is based on decadent and backward ideas. We therefore must have a go at demolishing such ideas so that women can contribute a great deal more in promoting the society."

ON INDUSTRIAL, ECONOMIC AND OIL AFFAIRS

Replying to a package of questions concerning industrial, economic and oil affairs, the

RCC Vice-Chairman, dealing with industrial development, said: "It is common knowledge that the scientific economic view of economic development rises on well-balanced action programmes. In other words, no development can possibly take place in the industrial sector, for instance, without some matching development in other sectors. Accordingly, efforts are being strained to develop agriculture, services and power projects. Sufficient details concerning this were given in the speech made by the President. The same speech gave an idea of the most important accomplishments achieved by the Revolution. Among those was the creation of the unity of national forces, the national front, the March 11 Manifesto, the establishment of peace, the realisation of drastic agrarian reform, the achievement of an agrarian revolution in the rural areas, the achievement of economic progress in various spheres based on dropping down the capitalistic road as the path of development and the adoption of the socialist road for the building of the desired society, side by side with the establishment of friendly relations with the socialist countries, including in the forefront the Soviet Union with which we have concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. There was also the recognition we extended to the GDR in defiance of the Halls-tein doctrine, the nationalisation of oil on June 1, and several other accomplishments made up the road of building a new society".

OIL RESOURCES ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

To a question on the role played by the oil resources in development, the Vice-Chairman of the RCC said: "Petroleum has been and still is constituting the major portion of our financial revenues. But there has been a fundamental change in this respect in the days that followed the outbreak of July 17, Revolution. Serious preparations were made to discard the principle of the one-sided economy, and of utter reliance on oil resources. We have covered substantial grounds in this respect although 70 per cent of the country's petroleum is now under national control. After June 1, we have become in possession of 58 million tons of oil produced in the Northern fields. Through the national exploitation of oil in the districts taken over under Law No. 80, our production there has now topped five million. On April 7, 1974, this production will rise to 18 million tons, and in the last quarter of 1975, something between 40 million and 50 million tons. Production in these fields is under the supervision of the friendly Soviet Union. Nevertheless, we still stick to the slogan of discarding the onesided economy in favour of developing agriculture and industry. As regards agriculture, we have some 32 million donums of arable land, in addition to 16 million donums of pasture lands and forests. Of this total 12.5 million is under actual cultivation. In the National Development Plan, ID. 350 million

was earmarked to the agricultural sector, including ID. 164 million for irrigation, drainage and land reclamation. In the Investment Programme of 1973-74, ID. 68.5 million was appropriated to the agricultural sector, including ID. 26 million for irrigation, drainage and land reclamation. These figures should give you a clue of the attention devoted to the agricultural sector and the work carried out to put an end to the idea of a one-sided economy.

NO OBSTACLES IN OIL MARKETING

"As to the obstacles that came in our way while marketing oil in the days following the nationalisation of the IPC, we can say that no real obstacles came in the way of production though some marketing problems presented themselves only in the first month following the nationalisation act. To quote figures, let us take the month of May, 1972 and 1973, as an illustration. In May, 1973, production was up 43.7 per cent from May 1972. Before signing the agreement with oil companies on March 1, 1973, we had marketed close to 90 per cent of our production from the northern fields. That was marketed to various countries and companies, including in the forefront the Soviet Union, France, Greece, Spain and others. We have also worked out a programme to answer the rising demand on our oil. This programme provides for expanding production to include ten more million tons of oil from the northern fields by the end of 1975. The

production of northern oilfields shall increase by 5,300,000 tons, and next by ten million tons. This all is in addition to the current rate of production. From the above it will be seen that no impediments worth mentioning had come in the way of either production or marketing. This is because the companies had submitted and accepted the accomplished fact on March 1, 1973, after having tried to ignore part of this accomplished fact for so many years, and particularly during the period from June 1, 1972 and March 1, 1973".

Replying to a question as to whether there were still problems between Iraq and the oil companies, the RCC Vice-Chairman said : "There are no problems still unresolved between us and the oil companies in regard to Law No. 80 of 1961, and Law No. 69 of 1972."

That was the last question in the press conference that lasted about four hours.

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